

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8433

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

FBIS OKINAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 14880

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PING SEDU CH

SUBJ: EDUCATION QUESTION -- FEI I -MIN VIEWS

REF: (A) PEKING 2420; (B) HONG KONG 14825 AND PREVIOUS

1. IN DECEMBER 17 CONVERSATION WITH CONGEN OFFICERS, TA
KUNG PAO PUBLISHER FEI I-MIN RESPONDED TO QUESTION ON THE
NATURE OF THE EDUCATION DEBATES IN CHINA (REFTELS) BY SAYING
THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT MATTER IN CHINA WAS THE CAMPAIGN TO
LEARN FROM TACHAI AND TO BUILD TACHAI -TYPE COUNTIES. FROM
THIS PERSPECTIVE, FEI THEN DISCUSSED THE EDUCATION QUESTION
AND DEFENDED THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION
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(CR) FOR BRINGING THE MASSES INTO THE EDUCATION PROCESS.

FEI CONTENDED THAT THE CURRENT DISCUSSIONS WERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF REINFORCING THE ALREADY AGREED LINE UPHOLDING THE CR POLICY FOR PROLETARIANIZATION OF EDUCATION. DEBATES WERE NOT, HE SAID, BEING RAISED WITH A VIEW TO REACHING A NEW POLICY LINE.

2. FEI DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD REVEAL "CLASS ENEMIES" WHO WOULD HAVE TO BOW TO THE MASS LINE ON EDUCATION. FEI PARTICULARLY SINGLED OUT FOR CRITICISM "LU PING" AT PEKING UNIVERSITY (SIC) SAYING THAT WHILE HE SHOULD BE PRAISED FOR CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF CHINESE SCIENTISTS, HE HAD ALSO TURNED DOWN A NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF THE WORKERS FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY, AND THIS WAS WRONG. (COMMENT: MOST OBSERVERS OF THE DEBATE IN PEKING IDENTIFY THE INDIVIDUAL IN QUESTION AS LIU PING (0491/0393), AN OFFICIAL OF TSINGHUA'S RC, AND NOT LU PING (7120/1627), FORMER HEAD OF PEKING UNIVERSITY, WHOM WE BELIEVE FROM OCTOBER 1, NATIONAL DAY LISTING TO BE AN OFFICIAL OF ONE OF THE MACHINE BUILDING MINISTRIES (SEE HK A-203).)

3. FEI'S COMMENTS CONTINUED WITH IDENTIFICATION OF A THREE-WAY COMBINATION OF "LEARNING, PRODUCTION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH" AS THE MODEL FOR CHINA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM. HE ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS STILL THE NEED FOR SOME "SPECIAL" TRAINING OF STUDENTS IN SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND LINGUISTIC FIELDS AND JUSTIFIED STUDY ABROAD AS THE MEANS OF PRODUCING INDIVIDUALS WHO COULD DEAL WITH CHINA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS WHILE THOSE WHO STUDIED IN CHINA WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY TRAINED TO MEET THE DOMESTIC NEEDS. HE REPLIED THAT THE "PREPARATORY CLASSES" (PU SHI PAN) WERE A SATISFACTORY MEANS OF GIVING WORKER-PEASANT-SOLDIER STUDENTS THE PROPER BASE FOR BEGINNING THEIR UNIVERSITY TRAINING AND THAT THIS WAS THE ANSWER TO CRITICS OF THE SELECTION SYSTEM FOR ADMISSIONS. FEI ALSO STATED THAT THE DECEMBER 18 ENGLISH TA KUNG PAO "THIS WEEK" COLUMN WOULD OFFER A READILY UNDERSTANDABLE PERSPECTIVE ON THE EDUCATION DISCUSSIONS.

4. COMMENT: FEI ON THE WHOLE APPEARED DEFENSIVE THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSIONS AND WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO MENTION EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS. HE ALSO ARGUED THAT ISSUES LIKE EDUCATION

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WHICH APPEAR TO PRESENT CONTRADICTIONS OVER A PERIOD OF MONTHS WERE IN FACT REFLECTING THE NORMAL ACTION OF THE DIALECTIC AND THE PROCESS OF CLASS STRUGGLE.

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